

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-02 SY-05 GSA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PC-01 AID-05 /068 W
-----095962 122248Z /14

O 122224Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0050

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 8712

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS CO
SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY: FORMER MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT
ASSASSINATED

1. FORMER MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT (UNDER PRESIDENT LOPEZ MICHELSEN) RAFAEL PARDO BUELVAS WAS ASSASSINATED THIS MORNING IN HIS OWN HOME IN BOGOTA BY TWO MEN WEARING MILITARY UNIFORMS AND CARRYING SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT ATTACK WAS CARRIED OUT BY MEMBERS OF AN URBAN GUERRILLA BAND AND MAY BE RELATED TO PARDO'S ROLE IN SUPPRESSING LAST YEAR'S SEPTEMBER 14 GENERAL STRIKE (ABOUT 20 LIVES WERE LOST AND HUNDREDS WERE INJURED).

2. PRESIDENT TURBAY HAS BEEN MEETING SINCE NOON WITH PRINCIPAL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ADVISORS, AND ALL EMBASSY SOURCES INDICATE THAT GOVERNMENT IS VERY UPSET BY PARDO'S MURDER. WHILE THIS COUNTRY HAS LONG TRADITION OF VIOLENCE AND URBAN GUERRILLAS HAVE CARRIED OUT NUMEROUS BOMBINGS AND OTHER VIOLENT ACTS IN RECENT MONTHS, CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THIS LATEST ACT ARE ESPECIALLY TROUBLING, I.E., FACT THAT EX-MINISTER WAS MURDERED IN HIS OWN HOME IN DAYTIME AND BY ASSASSINS IN UNIFORM. MOREOVER, ASSASSINATION APPEARS AS ACT OF DEFIANCE IN RESPONSE TO SECURITY STATUTE PROMULGATED BY GOC ONLY LAST WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, AS CHALLENGE TO
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TURBAY ADMINISTRATION'S AUTHORITY AND AS, POSSIBLY, ONLY FIRST IN A SERIES OF VIOLENT ACTS COMMEMORATING LAST YEAR'S GENERAL STRIKE.

3. WE HAVE BEEN PROVIDED EXTRA POLICE PROTECTION AS IS ROUTINE HERE WHEN TROUBLE BREWS. NEXT 24 HOURS SHOULD INDICATE LIKELY EXTENT OF TROUBLE ARISING OUT OF STRIKE ANNIVERSARY AND GOC'S

ABILITY TO MAINTAIN CONTROL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, ASSASSINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BOGOTA08712
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780371-0473
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780974/aaaacirr.tel
Line Count: 64
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 39dadf51-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1458682
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERNAL SECURITY: FORMER MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT ASSASSINATED
TAGS: PINS, CO, (BUELVAS, RAFAEL PARDO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/39dadf51-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014